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SPEAKS FOR POLAND AT RUSSIAN DINNER

Priest Tells Other Guests They Are His Enemies.

NEW LINE HAS A SEND-OFF

Roosevelt and the Czar Toasted at Banquet on the Smolensk of the New York-Libau Route.

The Polish desire for independence found a spokesman in the midst of an outburst of Russian patriotism at a dinner held last night to celebrate the initial trip of the steamship Smolensk of the Russian Volunteer Fleet on the new New York-Rotterdam-Libau route.

The Smolensk, in charge of her present commander, Capt. Peter Troyan, saw service in the Far East in the Russo-Japanese war, and thoughts of the great struggle which ended so unluckily for Russia were uppermost in the minds of the 150 or more Russians who sat down around the long table on the promenade deck of the big steamship. Among those who attended the dinner were Nicholas Ladygensky, Russian Consul General in this city; Baron Schilling, the Vice Consul; the Right Rev. A. A. Hotovitzky, Archpriest of the Cathedral of St. Nicholas in East Ninety-seventh Street, and other prominent Russians and shipping men. Oscar L. Richard, President of the State Bank, and head of the firm of C. B. R. Richard & Co., agents for the Russian liners, was the toastmaster.

The man who spoke for Poland was the Rev. Leo P. Kwasniewski, rector of St. Adalbert's Church, in the Bronx, and manager of St. Joseph's Home for Polish Immigrants.

"I must look upon you Russians as my enemies," said he. "I cannot help but do so. It is in my blood. Russia was one of the three great countries which divided Ostrolenka, but there is no evil out of which some good does not come, and I do not hesitate to say to-night that I would rather see a Russian company get the passenger traffic between this country and Poland than a German line. I shall send all I can with the steamers of this fleet."

There was a moment of painful tension after the Polish priest had ended his remarks. It was broken by Consul General Ladygensky, who was a press censor in the Turkish war and is a diplomat. He got up from his seat, and with glass in hand advanced on the Polish clergyman. Commander Troyan followed him, and both clinked glasses with the priest, while a number of Russians took up the strains of the "Nieschnye Polska," the Polish anthem.

M. Ladygensky was the first speaker. He proposed a toast to Theodore Roosevelt the peacemaker, and expressed the hope that the new steamships, the first direct line between the United States and Russia, would help to cement the friendship between the two countries. The toast was drunk standing, while the orchestra played "My Country, 'Tis of Thee."

Mr. Richards spoke next. He proposed a toast to the Czar. M. Ladygensky referred to Mr. Roosevelt as the man who had been doing in the twentieth century what Washington had done in the eighteenth and Lincoln in the nineteenth century.

Mr. Richards said:

"We have at the head of the Russian Government a young man as patriotic as the most patriotic of his subjects. We hear through the press that his hands are tied, but I ask you to drink health and long life to his imperial Majesty the Czar."

There were several other speeches. The Smolensk, which is a very fine twenty-knot steamship, brought 700 passengers on her initial trip. The other ships of the line are similar in construction and speed. They are the Petersburg and the Saratov, both of which were employed as auxiliary cruisers in the war.

Mr. Richards said at the dinner that the North Atlantic conference had declared war on the Russian Line, but that they were ready to take up the challenge.

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